PDS Scheme;

(b) if so, the details of the scheme;

(c) whether the people living above poverty line including income tax payers are being totally excluded from the purview of the new PDS;

(d) if so, whether any State has opposed this scheme;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the reaction of the Government thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government has decided to streamline the Public Distribution System (PDS) with focus on the poor. Details of the scheme are as under :

(i) All families living Below the Poverty Line (BPL) shall be provided with 10 kgs. of foodgrains per month per family at about half the Central Issue Price.

(ii) Identification of population below poverty line shall be taken up by State Government/UT Administrations on the basis of provisional estimates of below poverty line population worked out by the Planning Commission for 1993-94 adopting the methodology of the Expert Group under the Chairmanship of Late Prof. Lakdawala.

(iii) The average lifting of foodgrains for the last 10 years by the States is proposed to be confined for the benefit of the population Above the Poverty Line, at present getting the benefit of the P.D.S. The quantity of foodgrains and of this average lifting which is in excess of the requirement for the population Below Poverty Line is proposed to be allocated to States as a transitory allocation at the Central Issue Price.

(iv) The State Governments/UT Administrations will have to ensure fool-proof identification of poor, delivery of foodgrains to Fair Price Shops (FPSs) for distribution to the poor in a transparent and accurate manner.

(v) Specially subsidised foodgrains will be issued also to all beneficiaries under the Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS)/Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) at the rate of one kg. per man day.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) to (f) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Use of Hindi

570. SHRI JAGDAMBI PRASAD YADAV : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the modern gadgets such as computer, telex, teleprinting etc. installed in the Ministry in Roman Script are being converted into bilingual ones;

(b) if so, the manner in which these bilingual gadgets would be put into use by the Ministry;

(c) the manner in which the use of Hindi will be promoted;

(d) whether the Ministry has given exemption for use of Hindi to their offices located in Region 'A' where work has to be done cent percent in Hindi; and

(e) if so, the reasons for giving such an exemption?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ) : (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The mother board of various computers, electronic typewriters etc. are supplied with bilingual keys. Several software packages, both bilingual and in Hindi exclusively, are also available, thus increasing working in Hindi.

(d) and (e) No, Sir.

[English]

Smuggling of Arms, Explosives and Narcotics

571. SHRI NAMDEO DIWATHE : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether incidence of trafficking in arms, explosives and narcotics along the Pakistani borders and Western Coast have increased recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to deal with the problem and strengthen the vigilance on the western coast during the last one year;

(d) whether the problem has been discussed with the neighbouring countries; and

(e) if so, the outcome thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) and (b) The smuggling of arms and narcotics has shown a decreasing trend across the Indo-Pak border whereas smuggling of explosives has increased as in 1996, 111 kgs. of RDX was seized compared to 30 kgs. in 1995. On Western Coast also, though one boat with some arms was seized but there are no reports of increasing trend.

(c) Following steps have been taken to strengthen the Indo-Pak border and western coast :

(i) Additional Bns have been sanctioned under expansion plan to reduce the gaps between the BOPs.

(ii) Patrolling/Nakas have been increase/intensified.

(iii) Border patrolling have been intensified by providing jeeps and motor cycles.

(iv) Mounted patrolling on horse, camels and tractors is being done.

(v) OP Towers have been erected.

(vi) Binoculars, goggles, twin telescopes, PNV binoculars and hand held search lights have been provided for enchanced vigilance on the border.

(vii) Border fencing and flood lighting has been done/ Being done.

(viii) Boats/Motor Boats have been provided for patrolling riverine/creek area.

(ix) Border roads/tracks are being constructed/ developed for vehicular patrolling.

(x) Coastal security has been/is being strengthened by Ministry of Defence.

(d) and (e) The issues regarding smuggling of arms, explosives and narcotics are being taken up at diplomatic level by Ministry of External Affairs and are discussed during various bilateral meetings convened by Ministry of Finance, Narcotics Control Bureau and Border Security Force.

[Translation]

Press Mud and Spent Wash

572. SHRI SOHAN BEER : Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that the 'press mud and spent wash' of the sugar mills can be used for producing gas with a little technical change which in turn can be used for the generation of electricity;

(b) if so, whether this technique has been used by any sugar mill; and

(c) if so, the results achieved there-from ?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV) : (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. As per the information available from the Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources (MNES) and the All India Distillers' Association (AIDA), the Press Mud and Spent Wash can be used for generating bio-gas which can be utilized for producing steam/electricity. According to MNES, they had sponsored R & D projects for setting up of pilot plants for producing bio-gas from Press Mud at M/s Ugar Sugar Works Ltd. Ugarkhurd, Distt. Belgaum (Karnataka) and M/s Vasantdada Shetkari Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Ltd., Distt. Sangli (Maharashtra).

As regards use of Spent Wash, according to AIDA, a large number of distilleries are engaged in the production of bio-gas by anaerobic digestion of this distillery waste. The bio-gas in turn is used for domestic purposes and as a fuel in boilers for generation of steam/electricity.

[English]

Administrative Set-up of BSF in West Bengal

573. SHRI AJOY MUKHOPADHYAY : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to streamline the present administrative set-up of the Border Security Force on the Indo-Bangladesh border in West Bengal to prevent large-scale smuggling of different types of Indian goods across the border;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) to (c) Border Security Force has been entrusted with the responsibility of Indo-Bangladesh Border Management including West Bengal. The performance of the Force is reviewed from time to time and necessary measures are taken to streamline its functioning. These measures include augmentation of man power, setting up of border out-posts, intensive patrolling, night vigil and Nakas etc

Kerala State Scheduled Tribes Land Amendment Bill, 1996

574. SHRI P.C. CHACKO : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to New-item captioned "VHP appeals to President to return Kerala Bill" appearing in the "Hindu", dated February 1, 1997;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the present position in regard to Kerala State Scheduled Tribes Land Amendment Bill, 1996 ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) to (c) The Governor of Kerala has reserved the Kerala